

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please enter the following amended claims:

1. (canceled).
2. (canceled).
3. (twice amended) A method for detecting a measuring protease in a biological sample, said method comprising~~which comprises the steps of:~~

(1) contacting one of two or more substantially continuous slices of a biological sample with a thin membrane which comprises a protease substrate together with a hardening agent formed on a surface of a support;

(2) contacting the remaining slices with a thin membrane which comprises a protease substrate, a hardening agent, and a protease inhibitor formed on a surface of a support;

(3) detecting traces of digestion formed on the thin membranes by the action of protease; and

(4) comparing the trace of digestion on the thin membrane used in step (1) with the trace of digestion on the thin membrane used in step (2).

4. (canceled).

5. (twice amended) A method for detecting a measuring protease in a sample, said method comprising~~which comprises the steps of:~~

(1) contacting a sample ~~containing protease~~ with a thin membrane which comprises at least the following two layers: layer (a) which contains a protease substrate, a hardening agent, and a protease inhibitor formed on a surface of a support, and layer (b) which contains a protease substrate and a hardening agent laminated on layer (a);

(2) detecting traces of digestion formed on the thin membrane by the action of
protease; and

(3) comparing the trace of digestion on layer (a) with the trace of digestion on layer
(b).

6-18. (canceled).
